



Autumn 2006

Montana Department of Corrections The Correctional Signpost



Director Mike Ferriter addresses central office staff about its important role in supporting all corrections functions.

Bunke takes over adult community corrections post

Pam Bunke, with 26 years of experience in the corrections field, is the new administrator of the Adult Community Corrections Division in the Montana Department of Corrections. She assumed her new duties Sept. 5 after being regional administrator of probation and parole in Billings since 1998.

Bunke, who grew up in Miles City, replaces Mike Ferriter, who became director of the Corrections Department on July 1 after more than a decade as community corrections administrator and nearly 30 years in the profession.

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Director: Central office plays key role of support

**By Bob Anez
Communications Director**

Department of Corrections Director Mike Ferriter stood before a large screen displaying the image of a jigsaw puzzle with a piece missing. It was part of the newly appointed director's message to several dozen members of the department's central office staff.

He urged the employees to think about where they fit in the big picture of helping the department fulfill its mission.

"Whatever your role may be, how are you supporting that mission?" Ferriter asked the staff.

And support is the key word, he said. The central office staff provides assistance to all those hundreds of department employees in the field and at the various institutions, from probation and parole to victim assistance and youth services, Ferriter said.

"You're touching every one of those areas," he said. "You may not think about it, but you do."

Ferriter's comments came during a two-hour presentation to central office workers a few weeks after he took over as head of the state's third-largest agency. He replaced Bill Slaughter, who retired at the end of June after more than five years as director.

In addition to the director, Ron Alsbery, Probation and Parole Bureau chief; Karen Duncan, chief of the

Youth Community Corrections Bureau; and Sally Hilander, victim information specialist, addressed the gathering and explained the functions of their offices. Ferriter said he



Alsbery

wanted to ensure that all those in the central office understood the breadth of the work done by the department.

During the meeting, Anna Whiting-Sorrell, Gov. Brian Schweitzer's adviser

on corrections and human services issues, arrived and said the governor wanted her to welcome Ferriter to the administration's team.

She stressed the importance that Schweitzer places on corrections, saying, "If we can turn around the lives of offenders and their families, that would be fine as legacy for his career as governor."

Ferriter told the staff that working for corrections is a unique opportunity for everyone. "You've made a commitment to work in an area that is different," he said. "When you say you work for the Department of Corrections, people have more interest than if you work for some other state agencies.

"This is a \$136 million (a year) operation and the governor says this is critical to him, his future and the state of Montana," he added. "The bar's raised pretty high."

Because the department is responsible for supervising offenders, the public expects those involved in that



Duncan

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Ferriter

FROM Page 1

process to be above reproach, to meet a higher standard, Ferriter said. He summarized the department's code of ethics for employees and said staff, in taking the jobs they hold, have made a commitment to abide by those requirements. (See Page 3)

Ferriter distributed framed copies of the code of ethics to all administrators, telling them to display the directives prominently in their offices.

The director said employees should keep in mind four words as they carry out their duties: innovation, dilemma, distraction and integrity.

Innovation embraces the notion that everything can be improved and that philosophy is important in dealing with thousands of offenders, he said. Dilemma is created when the solution to one problem creates another, something that is especially notable when spending on one program creates financial woes for another, Ferriter said.

Distractions occur when employees' focus is drawn away in a conflicting direction and those situations need to be avoided, he said. Ferriter described integrity as "doing the right thing even when no one is looking."

He said corrections employees should be proud of what they do because they log remarkable achievements every day. Managing a system with 12,000 offenders seemingly would result in frequent problems and upheaval, but that is not the case with the Montana Department of Corrections, he said.

"Why don't we have more trouble?" Ferriter said. "People treat offenders right. That is another sign of integrity."

"It's important that we remember who's out there and why we do this," he said.



Hilander



Bill Dabney, prison ranch director, receives a plaque recognizing his 25 years as a state employee, from Warden Mike Mahoney. Corrections Director Mike Ferriter, far right, looks on.

MSP staff honored

Montana State Prison employees perform small miracles every day on their jobs in a unique world turned upside down, but they seldom realize their daily achievement, the Rev. Robert Porter, prison chaplain, said in kicking off staff appreciation day at the Deer Lodge prison.

At the late August event, dozens of MSP employees were honored for their years of service to the state.

The list included Henry Richter, a laundry worker and 30-year employee. Nine others were recognized for reaching the 25-year mark in state government: Bill Dabney, ranch director; Denise DeYott, mail clerk supervisor; Jim Kelly, maintenance supervisor; Robert Kichnet, Gerald Kitchen, Garry Tallon and William Wind, correctional officers; Michael Miller, laundry supervisor; and Chris Wyant, admissions officer.

Ten more were cited for 20 years of service to the state; John Aspholm, Thomas Blodnick, Vernon McDonald, Gary Marshall and Dennis Reiss, correctional officers; David Hackman, transportation officer; Robert Hust, case manager; Paul Lucier, unit manager; Keith Miller, special response team; and Lt. Howard Wigert.

Corrections Department Director Mike Ferriter praised the prison employees for their commitment to a unique profession. He said many Montanans see the prison as the face of corrections in the state because it is the most familiar to citizens.

He stressed the importance of dealing with offenders in a proper fashion, saying, "In order to make this work, we need to treat some very difficult people with a certain level of dignity."

Warden Mike Mahoney applauded the employees for some major achievements during the past year. He mentioned expansion of the prison transportation office, opening of the old reception unit, creation of security threat group and emergency response coordinator positions, the launch of a pilot project for employee transportation and new uniforms for security staff.

**Write for the
SIGNPOST**

*Tell us what's happening
in your facility, division,
bureau or office*

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444-0409

Corrections Code of Ethics

1. I shall perform my duties with high standards of honesty, integrity and impartiality, free from personal considerations, favoritism and partisan demands.
I shall be courteous, considerate and prompt when serving the public.
2. I shall maintain respect and professional cooperation in my relationships with other department staff members. I will not sexually harass or condone sexual harassment of any person.
I shall treat others with dignity, respect and compassion.
3. I shall report job-related illegal or unethical behavior to the appropriate authority.
4. I shall provide offenders with humane custody and care, void of retribution, harassment, abuse or mistreatment. I shall maintain confidentiality of information that has been entrusted to me and designated as such.
I will not incur any personal obligation that could lead any person to expect official favors.
5. I will not discriminate against any offender, employee or member of the public on the basis of age, race, gender, religion, creed, political belief or national origin.
6. I shall conduct myself in a manner that will not demean offenders, fellow employees or others.
7. I shall uphold the tenets of the United States Constitution, its amendments, the Montana Constitution, federal and state laws, rules and regulations, and policies of the department.
8. Whether on or off duty, in uniform or not, I shall conduct myself in a manner that will not bring discredit or embarrassment to the Department of Corrections and the state of Montana.
9. I will not use my official position for personal gain.
10. I shall maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene, grooming and neatness while on duty or otherwise representing the department.

DOC investigators get peace officer status

In an historic development, the three Montana Department of Corrections investigators have assumed the title of peace officers.

Bill Fleiner, chief of the Investigation and Compliance Monitoring Bureau; chief investigator Mike Micu and investigator Jeff Crowe were sworn in as criminal investigative agents by Attorney General Mike McGrath in late August.

This is the first time department investigators have had this status in the law enforcement community.

Fleiner said the change means the investigators will no longer have to undertake statewide investigations under authority of the Powell County sheriff's office. That situation created a significant liability for Sheriff Scott

Howard as Micu and Crowe conducted probes of alleged wrongdoing by department staff or offenders in correctional facilities across the state.

This situation is much cleaner than in the past when the investigators found themselves conducting state business under authority of a local jurisdiction, Fleiner said.

Their new status still means the investigators have access to confidential

criminal justice information, can participate in state Justice Department training opportunities and exercise arrest powers. But they now have a responsibility to provide regular reports on their investigations to the attorney general's office.



Attorney General Mike McGrath, far left, administers the peace officers oath to Bill Fleiner, Mike Micu and Jeff Crowe.

Bunke

FROM Page 1

Bunke's promotion comes at a time when the department is putting greater emphasis on placing more offenders in community supervision than in prison.

About 77 percent all offenders in Montana are on probation or parole and living in communities across Montana.

"The biggest challenge is the numbers coming at us in the community as we try to stay ahead of the growth with creative placements and specialized caseloads," Bunke said.

The division is developing more probation and parole officers with training to deal more effectively with certain offenders, such as those with drug and alcohol addictions, sexual offenses, mental health problems, and Ameri-



Bunke

can Indians confronting cultural barriers. In addition, officers are relying more heavily on treatment programs in the community to aid in keeping offenders out of prison and restoring them to productive lives.

Bunke, 51, said meshing the appropriate level of supervision with the necessary amount of treatment is critical. "They have to go hand in hand and that requires improved communication between officers and treatment providers," she said.

She said the growing

workload in community corrections will require additional officers and more training so they can handle a manageable number of cases. The department has 105 officers to handle about 8,200 offenders on probation and parole. Another 1,300 offenders are in other community corrections programs.

"It's not an easy walk," Bunke said of the struggle to balance the needs of offenders with protecting public safety. "If there's any cause for concern, I never have hesitated to keep them confined."

Bunke said she got into the corrections business by accident; she originally wanted to run a daycare. But she enjoys the work she has done since 1980 because it's always interesting and lacks

in dull moments. "You're always on your toes, constantly thinking – a lot of responsibility," she said. "I've always thrived on that."

"Pam brings a wealth of experience to her new job," Ferriter said. "During her years of dealing with offenders in the field, Pam has demonstrated a desire to be innovative in her approach to supervision. She is the perfect fit to head the division."

The division is responsible for a variety of programs, including probation and parole, prerelease centers,

assessment and sanction centers in Missoula and Billings, the male boot camp, DUI and drug dependency treatment programs, and the meth treatment centers under construction in Boulder and Lewistown.

'Pam brings a wealth of experience to her new job.'

-- Mike Ferriter

Central office's annual barbecue



Central office staffers used their lunch hour Aug. 23 to gather for the annual barbecue on the lawn outside the department headquarters in Helena. Albertsons donated the burgers, hot dogs and buns. Below, Marwan Saba handled the grill.



Employee saves child from fire

By Bob Anez
Communications Director

For Jon Straughn, it was a big day. He had no idea he would help save a life.

The Montana Department of Corrections employee arrived at Eastgate Elementary School about 3 p.m. to pick up his 5-year-old daughter, Cheyanne. It was her first day in the East Helena school and he was anxious to hear how the momentous experience had gone. As he walked with her from the building, he noticed a vehicle in the school parking lot. The smoke billowing from it caught his eye.

At first, Straughn wondered if the smoke was from cigarettes. "I thought those people were smoking a lot." Then he wondered if the engine had overheated.

Within seconds he realized neither was the case. The Dodge Ram Charger was on fire and children were inside.

Straughn, a former firefighter for the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, saw a woman at the open passenger door. He thought he heard her scream, "Help me. My baby's in there!"

He ran to the vehicle as did another man. That anonymous person had managed to pull a child safety seat containing a small child from the front seat of the vehicle through the passenger door. But he was unable to unfasten the seat belts holding it fast. The man was using his body to shield the baby in the safety seat from the smoke



Straughn

"There was so much smoke and flame. I breathed in a lot of smoke."

and flames engulfing the inside of the vehicle.

Straughn reached in and unclipped the seat belt, setting the car seat and its precious cargo free. Flames streamed from the back seat, fanned by the wind blowing through the open door of the vehicle.

"There was so much smoke and flame," he recalled. "I breathed in a lot of smoke."

Straughn, who has worked for the Department of Corrections almost four years and been network operations manager since August 2005, escaped without burns in his heroic effort.

His firefighting experience was a factor, he believes. "It wasn't as scary for me" to face fire and smoke as it might have been for someone without that background.

A third man apparently pulled an older child from the vehicle through the driver's side door. But Straughn didn't have time to find out his name or the identity of the man who had struggled with the safety seat. He had to leave to pick up his other daughter from nearby Radley School where she is a third-grader.

As it turned out, the woman whose screams had drawn Straughn to the burning vehicle was not the children's mother. She was, like Straughn and the other rescuers, merely a passerby. The mother had gone back into the school to retrieve her elder child's lunchbox and apparently the 5-year-old child had found some matches in the vehicle.

Straughn, 33, said that, throughout the emergency, he had to be aware of where his own daughter was and know that she was safe.

After the excitement died down, Cheyanne had second thoughts about who should be her after-school chauffeur. From now on, she told her dad, maybe Mom could pick her up.

Six DOC staff to get governor's excellence award

Six Department of Corrections employees received the Governor's Award for Excellence in Performance for their individual and team contributions to the department in serving the public and co-workers.

At a ceremony planned in Helena on Oct. 4, Gov.

Brian Schweitzer is to present the award to Cathy Redfern, Cindy Hiner, Kimberly Timm, Lisa Grady, Julie Buchman and Albert Hust. The event also honored employees from other state agencies.

In its 17th year, the award program publicly recognizes outstanding and dedicated

state employees for the work they do for the citizens of Montana.

The employees were selected by their supervisors, managers and peers for going the extra mile in doing their jobs.

"I am proud to count these workers as my colleagues,"

said Director Mike Ferriter. "They set an example every day of the kind of extraordinary public servants that can be found in every correctional office and facility across the state of Montana. They deserve this honor and

Boot Camp changes intake to Wednesday

By Karen Vaughn
Administrative Assistant

Treasure State Correctional Training Center has changed its regular intake day from every third Tuesday to every third Wednesday. The one day change, which took affect Sept. 13, will improve staffing and allow visitors to observe both a graduation and an intake at the Deer Lodge boot camp on the same day.

Over the years, Treasure State has had parole officers, members of the Board of Pardons and Parole, judges, county attorneys, legislators, victims, defense attorneys, governors and Department of Corrections employees observe intake to get a better idea of what the program entails.

During the intake process trainees are oriented to the regimented, strictly disciplined program. They receive almost two hours of intense verbal confrontation about their criminal behavior and physical exercise. Heads and facial hair are shaved except eyebrows, and they learn immediately to no longer use "I," "me," or "my" to refer to themselves. Instead, they call themselves "trainee."

This can be the beginning of the collapse of their self-centeredness and criminal identity, and the regeneration of an accountable, responsible and law-abiding citizen.

Graduations occur almost weekly depending on when a trainee's individual program requirements are satisfied. Graduates are required to read speeches they've written stating what they have learned and explaining their commitments, promises and goals.

Intake dates for the last quarter of 2006 are Oct. 4, Oct. 25, Nov. 15, Dec. 6 and Dec. 27.

Staff completes training

All permanent employees at Treasure State Correctional Training Center recently completed the 40-hour "Imagine 21" training.

The course, developed by The Pacific Institute, uses social learning theory and social cognitive theory. Central to this thought is that individuals are responsible for their own actions and can regulate their behavior through goal-setting, self-reflection and self-evaluation.

The methods promoted by the Pacific Institute dovetail very well with the boot camp's treatment philosophy.



The Director's Corner

Mike Ferriter

The Department of Corrections is Montana's third largest state agency, with 1,200 dedicated, professional and hard-working employees throughout the state. As good as our employees are, our obligation is larger than our capability.

Our responsibility to supervise some 12,500 adult and juvenile offenders – the equivalent of the combined populations in Miles City and Hamilton – is not something we can do alone. We rely on valued relationships with our private and public partners.

In all, the department's partners manage some 2,200 offenders in jails, prisons, a male revocation and sanction center, prerelease centers, assessment center, drug addiction treatment centers, felony drunken-driving treatment programs, foster parent guide homes, mentoring programs and faith-based services. Soon they will be running a pair of treatment centers for methamphetamine users and a female revocation, assessment and sanction center.

Our relationship with some partners dates back a quarter of a century. Our dealings are based on mutual trust and respect, but there's always a financial balancing act that goes on. While we want to pay these providers a fair price for the services they supply, we also have to ensure that taxpayers' money entrusted to us is spent wisely.

Sometimes that can result in strained relations, but in the end we all want the same things: to keep the public safe while offering offenders a humane and secure environment with opportunities to prepare themselves for returning to their communities.

We and our corrections partners, many of them nonprofit corporations, are engaged in a valuable public service that deserves some recognition and thanks.

So thanks to all our partners. Boyd Andrew Community Services runs the Helena Prerelease Center and will operate the new female meth treatment facility in Boulder; and Community, Counseling and Correctional Services Inc. has the Butte Prerelease Center, the WATCH program for felony DUI offenders, Connections Corrections for drug treatment, the START (Sanction, Treatment, Assessment, Revocation and Transition) center, and the male meth treatment center coming to Lewistown.

Alternatives Inc. runs the Billings prerelease center, provides enhanced supervision and alcohol monitoring services. Great Falls Prerelease Services Inc. and Missoula Correctional Services operate prerelease centers in their respective cities, and Correctional Corp. of America owns and manages Crossroads Correctional Center in Shelby. Dawson County and Cascade County run regional prisons in Glendive and Great Falls, and Missoula County operates an assessment and sanction center in Missoula.

For youth, Mountain Peaks Inc. in Great Falls provides mentoring services, Youth Homes Inc. in Missoula supplies guide homes, and the Rev. Steve Rice in Miles City offers faith-based services.

There's also the county sheriffs scattered across Montana who

Budget director tours prison, industries

By Bob Anez
Communications Director

David Ewer, budget director for Gov. Brian Schweitzer, toured Montana State Prison and Montana Correctional Enterprises in late July, calling the day-long event a "life experience for me."

Although a legislator for eight years and budget director for 21 months, this was the first opportunity Ewer had to see all aspects of the prison and industries operations. His visit came at a time when the Corrections Department and budget office are working on preparing the next two-year budget for presentation to the 2007 Legislature.

Ewer got a first-hand look at the prison's food factory, which produces 10,000 meals a day and is in desperate need of additional cooler storage space. He also visited the work dorm located outside the prison perimeter to better understand a proposal for expansion of that facility.

In addition to visiting several housing units, including maximum security, Ewer went through the furniture shop, tag and print plant, dairy and boot-making operation.

He said it was an eye-opening experience that gave him a new and personal perspective.

"It's not just numbers and boxes," he said. "It's people's careers and lives. I get to see this in flesh and blood."

Ewer said a key reason for his visit was to see how the various programs integrate with each other. He said he had not realized the role that Warden Mike Mahoney plays in overseeing the regional and private prisons in the state, by virtue of his responsibility for the state inmates housed in those facilities.

During the course of the tour, Ewer learned that the prison remains short about 10 correctional officers from what it needs to be fully staffed. Although that's better than the 50-officer shortage that existed in recent months, the lack of staff puts a squeeze on operations, he was told.

Ewer said he views the relationship between the administration and the department as a cooperative effort with the same goals.

"I look at it all as a team, where we're trying to put the resources in place that you need," he said.

"This is some of the most challenging work we do," Ewer said of corrections.

DOC Director Mike Ferriter, Deputy Warden Ross Swanson and MCE Administrator Gayle Lambert also joined the tour.



Budget Director David Ewer looks at footwear in the boot-making shop at Montana State Prison.



LEFT: Ewer talks with Joe Mihelic, food factory director.



BELOW: Ewer and Warden Mahoney meet with Blair Hopkins, treatment program manager.



Warden Mike Mahoney, right, and Budget Director David Ewer talk in the low-side mess hall.

Award

FROM Page 6

the thanks of all Montanans for their tireless commitment to corrections.”

Redfern, Montana State Prison infirmary supervisor, and Hiner, infirmary administrator, were instrumental in the prison complying with all remaining requirements of the settlement agreement in a lawsuit filed over medical care at the prison more than a decade ago. That compliance led to dismissal of all claims against the prison last fall.

Timm, Accounting Bureau chief, and Grady, collections unit manager, were cited for leading the department's successful assumption of the collection and distribution of victim restitution fees and offender supervision fees. The two programs have so far collected about \$5 million in fees, with collections growing about 16 percent annually since the department took over the responsibility.

Buchman, administrative officer in the Youth Services Division, was honored for her trademark prompt and courteous service to co-workers and the public with what fellow employees described as a “persistently positive attitude.” The nomination also noted her invaluable role as legislative liaison between the department and the governor's office during the Legislature.

Hust, a lieutenant at Montana Women's Prison in charge of visitation and emergency response, was nominated for his dedicated work in training new staff and the role model he offers to all fellow employees.

“Lt. Hust takes great pride in his work and it shows in everything he does, from his professionalism with his co-workers to firm, fair and consistent philosophy with the offenders,” his nomination read.

Pribnow heads prerelease unit

Kerry Pribnow, who has administered Department of Corrections programs at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy since early 2005, is the new manager of the department's prerelease center unit.

He replaces Michelle Jenicek, who resigned to be director of the Helena Prerelease Center for Boyd Andrew Community Services.



Pribnow

Pribnow's duties include monitoring the department's contracts with six prerelease centers in Billings, Butte, Great Falls, Helena, Missoula and Bozeman. He also is responsible for overseeing five other privately run correctional operations: the Billings Assessment and Sanction Center, Connections Corrections drug treatment program, the WATCH programs for treating felony drunken-driving offenders, the START (Sanction, Treatment, Assessment, Revocation and Transition) center, and the

meth treatment programs scheduled to open their doors next spring.

Pribnow, 34, who grew up in the small eastern Montana town of Lambert, has worked for the Corrections Department for four years. He has been a drill instructor at the Treasure State Correctional Training Center, an intensive supervision officer and as manager of the corrections programs offered at the law enforcement academy.

He also was a Billings police officer for eight years.

Pribnow first became interested in corrections when he found himself in a Montana State University sociology class taught by Bernie Driscoll, regional probation and parole administrator in Helena. He remembered Driscoll encouraging him to apply for an internship with the Bozeman probation and parole office.

Pribnow calls the corrections field challenging: “You're given a phenomenal task to do with limited resources and you're told to do the best with it.

“It's not so much different than my law enforcement background,” he said. “Your ultimate goal is still the safety of the community.”

MSP officer among SWAT grads

Sgt. Harold “Butch” Strey from Montana State Prison has completed a SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) training class at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in Helena. He was one of only 11 law enforcement officers in the class to finish the grueling course.

The first day weeded out

eight failing the physical testing and three failing short in firearms qualification. Strey, the only MSP officer to complete the course this year, said the class was demanding.

The officers learned firearms drills, practiced building entry and search techniques, and used a vacant Helena school

building to learn how to clear hallways with multiple doorways and stairwells. They were taught how to clear vehicles and trained in “tubular assaults,” which refers to taking on objects such as school buses and planes.

The class included a mock hostage situation and fake drug deal.

Corner

FROM Page 7

are willing to provide us space in their crowded

jails for offenders waiting for room in the corrections system.

Montanans can be proud of the cooperation among these public and private

partners. It's the way government and business should work together in the interests of public safety and the offenders we serve.

Riverside girls use art to battle meth



Girls at the Riverside Youth Correctional Facility show off their artwork for the anti-meth "Paint The State" project.

**By Cindy McKenzie
Superintendent**

Most of the young women at Riverside Youth Correctional Facility have been exposed to the very negative impacts of methamphetamine abuse from either personal use or family member

use. They have first-hand knowledge of the devastation to physical body, personal relationships and mental health that is a consequence of the use of this drug.

Developing an educational message to present to the community through the "Paint The State" pro-

gram allowed them to reflect on personal changes they are trying to make in their own lives, as well as allow them to be in the positive role of educator.

The program was devised to call attention to the problem of meth by creating large signs throughout the state.

The signs warned of the dire effects of using the illegal drug.

The girls' process of deciding on the message, drawing the design, and painting the poster allowed the girls participating to enhance skills of teamwork, cooperative planning and decision making, and compromising for the good of the whole during the course of construction.

Many staff at Riverside chipped in time and effort to help the young women paint a poster to enter in this contest. It was a joint effort between the education, maintenance and clinical departments. All staff involved stepped outside their normal work assignments and helped support this project by providing encouragement, supervision and ensuring the specifications of the project were met.

The girls were quite proud of the end result, and it can still be seen as motorists drive south out of Boulder. The poster is mounted on the north side of a larger sign just to the south of the fire department station.

Youth Services receives \$300,500 in four grants

Almost a third of a million dollars in federal grants to the Department of Corrections' Youth Services Division will provide funding to benefit young offenders by revamping substance abuse treatment programs, discouraging dangerous driving, expanding libraries and increasing knowledge of American Indian culture.

The division is awaiting word on a requested \$400,000 grant to develop a mentoring program for juveniles at the Pine Hills and Riverside youth correctional facilities.

The largest of the recent grants awarded to the divi-

sion was \$134,392 to improve student reading and academic achievement by enhancing the Pine Hills library's services and resources.

Pine Hills, which can accommodate 120 students in grades 6-12, wants to make the library more of an information and technology resource for students, teachers and staff.

This project will increase reading, academic achievement and critical thinking skills.

The money will be used to expand library hours to include weekends, purchase new reading software, contract with a

part-time library media specialist, provide professional development, purchase software for total library automation, create an automated cataloging system, and purchase five computers and a printer.

The project also includes development of a reading program and creation of a Library Resource Committee. Money will be used to purchase updated library media resources and books, and books recommend by the state Office of Public Instruction to implement Indian Education for All.

The division received a \$103,373 grant, matched with \$34,458 in state fund-

ing, to make changes in the drug treatment programs at Pine Hills and Riverside.

The money will pay for bringing to the facilities Don Coyhis, founder of the White Bison Medicine Wheel Treatment, and Harvey Milkman, from the Pathways to Change organization. They will train staff on substance use and abuse for incarcerated juvenile offenders. White Bison is culturally specific to Indian offenders, and Pathways will have a strong emphasis on methamphetamine treatment.

Media tour

Montana State Prison Warden Mike Mahoney, center with tie, answers questions from reporters during a tour of the prison facilities related to the Aug. 11 execution of David Dawson. The mid-July event offered journalists a chance to see the execution trailer, visit the maximum-security unit and gather information from prison officials in advance of the execution. Mahoney told reporters he considered his role in the execution to be the most difficult task faced by any state administrator. The tour was followed by an hour-long news conference involving Mahoney, Deputy Warden Ross Swanson, Powell County Scott Howard and prison security chief, Maj. Tom Woods.



Grants

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Some funds will finance training of staff in handling youth trauma so they can intervene when critical issues arise, such as suicide, substance abuse, risky sexual behavior, aggression, hallucinations, or bingeing and purging disorders. The purchase of urinalysis test cups will allow both facilities to conduct random testing on offenders involved in treatment.

Money also will allow parents to visit the facilities and become familiar with the treatment and staff. It will permit aftercare coordinators to bring youth to their community placements prior to their release so that they are familiar with parole conditions and those involved in their ongoing treatment.

A \$29,461 grant will finance Pine Hills and Riverside implementing the mandate of the Montana Constitution to include Indian cultural education in school curricula.

Funding will help develop courses that teach students about the unique heritage of Montana's Indians in a culturally responsive manner. The process includes ensuring that both schools' staffs have an understand-

ing of the history of Montana's Indian tribes, their respective governments and contemporary issues facing Montana Indians.

Schools will craft written policies that incorporate the distinct and unique cultural heritage of Indians. Each school will invite tribal members to talk with students and will plant "native plants" and Medicine Wheel flower gardens. Two professional development training meetings will be held to develop strategies for reaching Indian students.

Riverside will benefit from a \$22,909 grant through the Rural Education Achievement Program, which helps rural school districts that lack personnel and resources to compete effectively for federal competitive grants or receive grants too small to be effective in meeting needs.

Riverside will improve its library by purchasing updated reading materials, an automated cataloging system, furniture and new computers for teachers and students. Additional funds will be used to purchase new textbooks.

A grant of \$10,365 from the state Highway Traffic Safety Office will finance a risky drivers' education course at Pine Hills, Riverside and the Youth Transition Centers. The pro-

gram will use OPI's driver education and training curriculum with modifications that will focus on drinking and driving, seat belt use, speeding and other unsafe driving behaviors.

The OPI course will be altered by a National Institute of Corrections curriculum developer so the lessons are cognitive-based. This approach will address the thinking behind risky behavior in order to answer questions about why young drivers don't wear a seat belt or drive under the influence.

The \$400,000 pending grant would be used to expand the division's mentoring program in collaboration with Mountain Peaks Inc. of Great Falls. This would be done by recruiting mentors to begin the process while youth are still at Pine Hills and Riverside, adding a component to specifically address the unique needs of Indian offenders, and soliciting mentors in remote areas to work with youth when they return to communities.

The goal of this project is to give all juvenile offenders in the corrections system the chance for a positive relationship with at least one caring adult.

The request seeks \$400,000 over a four-year period.

Gibson addresses Chinese delegation

By Bob Anez
Communications Director

Steve Gibson went before a group of Chinese professionals recently to talk about how Montana deals with juvenile offenders, but ended up discussing everything from drunken driving to race relations.

The administrator of the Department of Corrections Youth Services Division spent almost two hours talking with about two dozen members of the All China Youth Federation, who were in Montana for week-long tour. The visit is part of an exchange program arranged through the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Gibson was invited to China and a representative of the center asked him to make similar addresses to other foreign delegations visiting Montana.

Although the questions ranged far from youth corrections, Gibson's remarks focused on the differences between adult and juvenile offenders. He said

most youth are distinct from adults both psychologically and socially, and corrections professionals have to take into account the stage of teens' brain development and their tendency to act on impulses.

Gibson, who relied on an interpreter, said the most important part of rehabilitation is treatment, and that involves education, life skills training and work development.

Economic conditions play a role in what happens to offenders of all ages in the U.S. court system, he said. Those with money are able to afford a better defense attorney and often can avoid ending up in the corrections system, he said.

Gibson noted that many offenders have both mental disorders and drug addictions that need to be treated, and he said the criminal justice system needs to do a better job of not punishing people for being seriously mentally ill.

To better service the wide variety of offenders, corrections agencies should collaborate with others, such as public health and mental health agencies, families, educators, and communities, he told the delegation. While some people always will need to be locked up, society must try to prevent people from entering the corrections system and to provide services for those leaving the system, Gibson added.

In the end, it is more cost-effective to deal with people in the communities, so long as those offenders do not pose a threat to public safety, he said. To succeed in the community, offenders need a place to live, a job, education and a chance to connect to their community, he said.

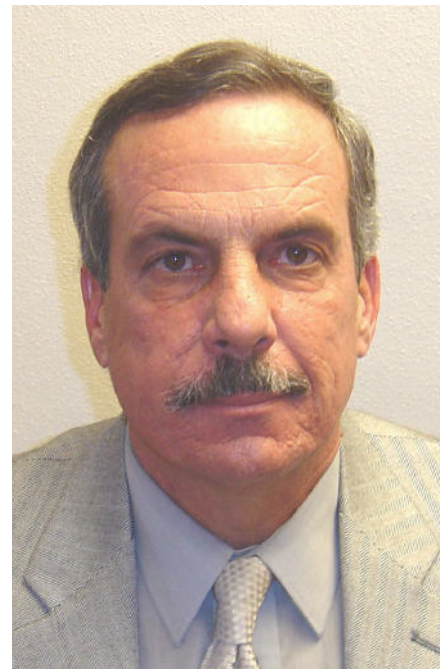
Gibson said the law allows certain juveniles as young as 12 to be tried as adults in Montana, depending on the crime. While that seldom happens in Montana, it occurs thousands of times in states such as Florida, he said.

He advocated that corrections be open with the news media and general public. By letting those groups know what is going on, suspicion of wrongdoing can be avoided, he said.

Members of the delegation asked several questions about the drug methamphetamine and how such an illegal substance could be so easily obtainable. Gibson said manufacture of the very addictive drug is cheap and easy, with some labs hidden in the rural areas of Montana.

For juveniles, the greatest drug problem remains alcohol, Gibson said. About 60 percent of young offenders list that as their drug of choice, while just 7 percent report using meth, he said.

Among the diverse topics covered during a lengthy question-and-answer session were drunken driving, Montana's new open container law,



Gibson

relations between Indians and non-Indians, institutional programming, raising children, media influences and length of stay in institutions.

The Chinese federation, founded in 1949, has grown to include 46 youth organizations throughout that nation. The federation is involved in a variety of programs aimed at education and training of Chinese youth.

Earlier this year, Gibson also was among 18 witnesses who testified before the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission in Boston. The day-long public hearing focused on juveniles in corrections.

The commission was authorized under the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 to study federal, state and local government policies and practices in regard to the prevention, detection and punishment of prison sexual assaults.

Gibson discussed the need for strong leadership that dictates zero tolerance for such incidents, adequate training for staff and juvenile offenders, proper facility design to reduce the potential for assaults, appropriate levels of staffing, and aggressive investigation of allegations.



New position focuses on mentally ill

In an effort to improve services for mentally ill offenders in Montana, two state agencies have collaborated to create a position with responsibility for better planning and coordination of programs available in prisons and communities across the state.

Deb Matteucci, former executive director and development director for the Montana Mental Health Association, became the first state behavioral health program facilitator July 17. She works with both the Department of Corrections and the Department of Public Health and Human Services.

Her primary tasks will be to ensure offenders receive appropriate and consistent mental health care throughout their involvement in the criminal justice and corrections systems, help identify treatment resources required by offenders and create a seamless network of services for those in need.

"We are embarking on a new frontier in how corrections and public health deal with the growing problem of mentally ill offenders," Corrections Director Mike Ferriter said. "We have an obligation to care for these individuals and to do so in a way that will help them stay on the right side of the law and remain productive citizens of Montana."

DPHHS Director Joan Miles said she and her staff are excited about "this innovative and collaborative project" with the Department of Corrections.



Matteucci

"We believe this will greatly improve services for people who are in the corrections system, and we hope it will also reduce the number of repeat offenders and help to provide a way out of that system," Miles said.

"We're delighted that someone as qualified as Deb Matteucci has stepped forward to accept this challenge."

A Kalispell native, Matteucci, 37, said she is looking forward to assisting a part of the offender population that faces "enormous obstacles in trying to

get their lives back on the right track."

"If we can do a better job of putting those people in touch with the mental health and addictions treatment they so desperately need, I believe we can salvage some lives and keep some of them from returning to the corrections system," she said.

Matteucci will work with county jails, local law enforcement officers, probation and parole officers, mental health centers, addiction treatment programs and DPHHS treatment staff. She will identify and work to abolish any gaps found in service.

The cooperation between the two departments makes sense, she said. Corrections provides some mental health services to offenders behind bars, and the health agency provides services to those on probation or parole through community programs, she explained. But too often, the services are not jointly planned by the departments and the treatments employed by one agency differ from those supplied by the other, Matteucci said.

Her work will benefit offenders at Montana State Prison, Montana Women's Prison, regional prisons at Glendive and Great Falls, Crossroads Correctional Center at Shelby, the DUI-treatment programs at Warm Springs and Glendive, Treasure State Correctional Training Center near Deer Lodge, those on probation or parole, and in prerelease centers.

**By Karen Vaughn
Administrative Assistant**

Boot camp graduate credits program for new life

When Steve Salminen arrived at the Treasure State Correctional Training Center, he thought he had entered a nightmare. That was April 2005. Today, he sees the boot camp as the best thing to ever happen to him.

Salminen's father was a convict and drug user, and Steve was very influenced by him as a teenager. Salminen was raised by his grandparents, who tried to teach him good values. But his grandmother died and he began using drugs and alcohol. His wife used meth and got addicted. The drug prob-

lems led to marital problems and they separated.

The separation pushed him still further into drug use and, in June 2002, he was arrested for possession and given probation. He could not stop his drug use and in August 2003 was caught with more drugs. He posted bond, but was using drugs again before leaving the parking lot. He was later arrested in an outpatient treatment program parking lot while using drugs. His children were taken away from him.

He finally realized what a mess his life had become.

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Salminen

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Salminen has always been good natured and optimistic. While in Great Falls, he looked forward to going to a prerelease center after an inpatient drug treatment program. But a screening committee denied him parole and recommended boot camp and aftercare. He remembers feeling cheated and full of self-pity.

But Salminen, 40, thought boot camp would be a quick and easy way out of his problems. He volunteered for the program, having no idea what was in store for him.

He said he considered himself a "tough cookie" before coming to the boot camp. Yet, on the first day, standing on line, he thought there was no way he was tough enough to complete the program. Thoughts about life not being fair continuously raced through his head. He also saw his age as a factor against him.

He credits the drill instructors for showing him he could complete the program. He's convinced the inspiration of his children and his belief in God helped him through the program and remembers Sgts. Saajid Muhammad and Claude Williams talking about daughters needing a father in their life.

Salminen said Sgt. Ed Stefalo pushed him harder and further than he ever thought he could go. He was amazed the drill instructors would spend so much time and effort helping trainees, logging the same long hours of physical training and running as the trainees.

Sgt. John Cavanaugh was an enormous inspiration to him, especially on the graduation run, when he advised Salminen, "It's all about what you do with your knowledge when you leave TSCTC."

Sgt. Rich Collins told him when he graduated, "You earned this, now use it."

To this day, Sgt. Jim Cameron's demand that he "suck it up" runs through his head every time he feels discouraged.

"It takes a lot of courage to really look at yourself," Salminen said, acknowledging that he had to be forced to take that look.

The boot camp program can tell a person what's wrong with him, but it is up to each man to use the tools for change, he said. He said the classes, especially those dealing with victim impacts and the ripple effect, helped him see the role he played in what had become of his life. Salminen believes he needed this kind of extreme program to get through to him.

Salminen graduated from Great Falls aftercare, recognized as the top "booter" for most of his time there. He obtained a job and quickly went from an hourly wage of \$8.50 to \$10. He has applied knowledge obtained at boot camp to regain custody of his daughters, get a divorce, and straighten out his credit and financial problems.

He has not used cigarettes, beer, liquor or drugs, and does not want them after recognizing the negative effect they had on his life.

While getting involved in community service building homes for Habitat for Humanity, he learned about Headwaters Economic Development Committee's programs. Through contacts he made volunteering, and the program at Headwaters, he expects to move into a new house with his daughters next year.

Salminen is enrolled at Montana Tech in Butte with plans to obtain a degree in engineering or industrial hygiene. And he's setting an example for his daughters, ages 10 and 14. They plan to go to college, too.

"Life is good," Salminen said.



Salminen

Advisory council provides advice

Department of Corrections officials asked the agency's advisory council for some advice, and they got plenty of it.

In a unique exercise in early September, division and facility administrators met with more than a dozen council members for about four hours to find out the kind of information members wanted from the department. The goal was for the agency to get a better understanding of where information is lacking and to identify the kind of details that should be included in the department's biennial report due out late this year.

The session, organized by the Staff Development and Training Bureau, produced a list of the top priorities for each division and secure facility.

Those issues included:

- How does the department assist communities with costs of placing inmates?
- What is the daily cost per inmate based on classification and facility?
- More public education is needed regarding prerelease centers and overall corrections.
- What kind of housing assistance do released inmates receive?
- How is it determined where an inmate is placed in the system?
- What is the number and cost of lawsuits filed against the department?
- How many inmates have mental health problems?
- What is done to provide treatment to mentally ill, sexual and violent offenders?
- How does the department deal with high turnover and tough-to-fill positions?
- Why do employees leave the agency?
- How do offenders find jobs as they leave prison?
- How long are the waiting lists for treatment programs at Montana State Prison?
- What are the demographics of inmates in terms of crimes and the counties they are from?
- What programming is offered at the women's prison?
- How many youth move into the adult system?
- How many high school diplomas and GEDs are awarded at juvenile correctional facilities?

New Employees

EDITOR'S NOTE: This list includes new hires from June 24 through Sept. 1, 2006, based on personnel records in the central office. If you notice any errors or omissions, please call the Signpost editor at (406) 444-0409, or e-mail him at banez@mt.gov.

Central Office

Myrna Kuka
Melissa Scow
Donna Stone

Montana State Prison

Michael Bury
Shannon Fouche
Monica Goosey
Albert Guay III
Marty Hunter
Tristan Kohut
Shona Marker
Frances Moreni
Deanna Morrison
Michelle Ogrin
Joseph Shafer
Steven Simon
Christine Slaughter

Joshua Wilcox

Montana Women's Prison

Michelle Jones
Brian Park
Paul Siegfried
Katie Stockton

Pine Hills

Melody Haynes
Ryan Johnson
Tara Losinski
Steven Martin
Duke Toni

Probation & Parole

Andrea Bethel, Missoula
Kathryn Forden, Kalispell
Patricia Joron, Hamilton
Sonya Mahlum, Great Falls
Mark Schellhorn, Kalispell
Evelena Werhonig, Billings

Riverside

Trevor Cardin

Youth Transition Center

Ross Murphy
Kara Murray
Armando Oropeza
Karen Skolrud

MSP names employees of the quarter

Nick Carter, Denise DeYott and Cindy Hiner were named Montana State Prison and Montana Correctional Enterprises employees of the quarter for the period beginning July 1.

Carter, a correctional officer, was the selection for security. On May 11, Carter was called upon to intercept a civilian motorist who had entered a secure area under the false pretense of being an attorney. Carter, who was forced to fire his weapon at the intruder, was applauded for his decisive response in this dangerous situation. The action displayed by Carter prevented other staff from being injured, and maintained the integrity of the institution.

DeYott was selected from the support staff. She has worked at the prison for 25 years and recently was involved in implementing electronic correspondence and visitation data programs that allow

information sharing between departments.

Hiner, director of nursing for the prison infirmary, was the management selection. She supervises a staff of 32 employees on three shifts and has made it her priority to work closely with staff to understand their needs with family issues, schedules and day-to-day work matters. Hiner has been instrumental in improving retention, working with training staff on team building and ensuring compliance issues were completed according to the settlement of a lawsuit over medical care in the prison.

Employees of the quarter receive a plaque, a certificate of appreciation, a special parking space during the quarter, have their photograph posted in the lobby of the administration building and are eligible for the employee of the year award.

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Montana Department of Corrections Mission

The Montana Department of Corrections enhances public safety, promotes positive change in offender behavior, reintegrates offenders into the community and supports victims of crime.

Signpost Deadlines

| <u>Deadline</u> | <u>Edition</u> |
|-----------------|----------------|
| March 31..... | Spring |
| June 30..... | Summer |
| Sept. 30..... | Fall |
| Dec. 30..... | Winter |